

COMPANIONSHIP FOR LIFE.

*SOUND ADVICE FROM THE CHRISTIAN WEEKLY ON MARRIAGE.*  
ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS FROM DISCOURSESABLE ELEMENTS CONCERNING IT IN THE MARCHES OF EXAMINERS AND CHRONICLES ON THE SUBJECT OF MARRIAGE.

"The wider our experience and observation grow," says the editor of the *Christian Weekly*, writing in the current number of that paper on the subject of marriage, "the more fully are we persuaded that there is need that common sense be applied to this unspeakably important event in human life. Not for a moment do we wish to be understood as saying that marriage is a matter of mere cool calculation. Love is the basis of true marriage; but it should be love, and not passion, not the mere sentiment of the passing moment. Love, we are told, laughs at locksmiths. And so true love can overcome all obstacles and break down all barriers. There are multitudes of instances where it has done this. But likewise there are multitudes of cases where marriage, entered upon in defiance of all the laws of common sense, has, as might easily have been foreseen, resulted most disastrously. The young man has not paused to consider whether there is anything of real womanhood behind the pretty face that attracts him, and he finds when too late, that he has a frivolous, querulous, useless wife. The young woman, gifted, it may be, and pure, falls to inferior herself as to the real character of her suitor, and all too soon awakens to a realization of the point he had.

"As the husband is, the wife is; then art made with a child." And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag them down. Will hold them, when his passion shall have spent its novel force, something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse."

When princes marry beggar-maids and young women marry their fathers' coachmen, the chances are not one in ten thousand that the marriage will be happy. Common sense is against it. What is true in these extreme cases is proportionately true in all cases. When young people are considering the question of marriage, they need, if ever in their lives, to exercise all the common sense of which they are possessed.

But common sense is not all that is necessary. Eleaser prayed that God would direct him to the right person to be the wife of Isaac. To be sure, it was Eleaser that prayed and not Isaac, at least so far as the record shows. But the circumstances of that patriarchal age were considered, the principle is clearly brought out that those contemplating marriage should seek divine guidance. Certainly if more marriages were prayed over, the scandalous business of the divorce courts would be greatly abridged or entirely abolished. The marriage service of the Anglican Church says that the state of matrimony "is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God." This fear of God, this seeking for his counsel, ought to mark every step of the way that leads a man and woman to unite their lives in a bond. And why should a man or woman not ask God for direction as to the right person to be a companion for life?

Why, when interested in some individual, should not the application be, "Lord, is this the person whom thou hast appointed for me?"

The more of real heart-deep sentiment there is between a married pair the better. But the reason of many a foolish and unworthy marriage, that fails in its highest and holiest aims, is that it has its origin in a mere sickly sentimentality as different from true sentiment as the shadow from the substance. When the divine guidance is sought it will lift the relation out of any mere sentimentality, and will put the divine sanction upon it.

So we say to all Isaac seeking their Rebekahs, as well as to the Rebekahs who are sought—exercise common sense in this matter, and above all, pray over it. It is too momentous to be trusted to the whim or the fancy of the passing moment. It is too momentous to be trusted even in more common sense. Isaac ne'er the divine guidance to lead him to Rebekah, and Rebekah needs that same guidance to show her that she may safely trust herself to Isaac. To a married pair thus brought together how applicable are Longfellow's vivid words:

"O fortunate, O happy day,  
When a man finds his place  
In the married house of earth,  
Like a new star just sprung to birth,  
And rolled on its harmonious way  
Into the boundless realms of space."

*From the Examiner and Chronicle.*

That is a beautiful and instructive touch in Mark's picture of our Lord's ministry, when he says that he "entered into a house, and would have no man 'know it; but He could not be hid." Mathew also tells the story of the healing of the Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter which follows, but the italicized words are peculiar to Mark. And how characteristic they are of Jesus. He was weary by the unintermittent toils of a long tour through the villages of Galilee, and turned aside into the coast of Tyre and Sidon that he might find a few days' rest. But his gracious presence could not remain a secret. Virtue went out from him wherever he went. And so even in his retirement the importunate mother sought him with a faith that would not let him go until he had blessed her by healing her daughter.

There is a lesson well worth learning for every Christian heart in these simple words. In just so far as the disciple is like his Master will it be impossible for him to be hid. A young convert, shrinking from the disagreeable duty of publicly confessing Christ, sometimes asks, can I not be a Christian outside of the church, in secret? Outside of the church, yes, though at great sacrifice and risk; in secret, no. And why? Because if the real fire of Christian love burns on the altar of a man's heart, it must make itself known and unkindle like fire in other hearts. The tree can hide its perfume as easily as the

factory can hide its smoke. The above named exhorter is right in his statement that it is the duty of the saved ones, great or small, to bring in their defense, to bring in their defense, the order, within twenty days here of the above named places in the Community, by advertising the same in the *Advertiser*, and that he shall need to exhibit his or her claim, within this said period of twenty days, to the *Advertiser*, and that the latter shall be forever barred of his or her claim, and the above named places in the Community, by advertising the same in the *Advertiser*, and that he shall need to exhibit his or her claim, within this said period of twenty days, to the *Advertiser*, and that the latter shall be forever barred of his or her claim, and the above named places in the Community, by advertising the same in the *Advertiser*, and that he shall need to exhibit his or her claim, within this said period of twenty days, to the *Advertiser*, and that the latter shall be forever barred of his or her claim, 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